



The Claimant's Guide to UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE BENEFITS

**File Online At:
NEworks.nebraska.gov**

Nebraska Claims Center

P.O. Box 94600

Lincoln, NE 68509-4600

Phone 402-458-2500

Fax 402-458-2595

TTY 402-471-0016

(Deaf and Hard of Hearing)

The Nebraska Unemployment Insurance Program is governed by the Nebraska Employment Security Law (NESL) *Neb. Rev. Stat. § 48-601 to 48-671* and related statutes. It is administered by the Nebraska Department of Labor, a state agency. The NESL and Nebraska Administrative Codes (NAC) cited can be viewed at: **dol.nebraska.gov**.

Benefits are paid from the Nebraska State Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund. The fund is supported solely by a special tax on employers. No deductions are taken from employees' paychecks for unemployment insurance.

This guide is not intended to take the place of the law, but to provide you with a general understanding of some of the requirements.

FROM THE COMMISSIONER

DEAR NEBRASKA JOB SEEKER:

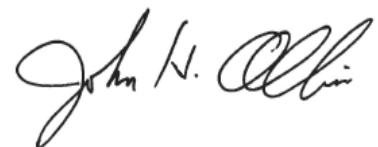
The purpose of this handbook is to assist you in navigating the process of applying for Unemployment Insurance benefits as you search for new employment in Nebraska or while you are on temporary layoff status. These benefits are an important support to you as you are experiencing this period of unemployment. Please read this handbook carefully and follow the instructions contained herein.

For most applicants, these benefits are contingent upon two important things that you must do in order to receive these benefits: register for work and actively search for work.

To aid in the reemployment process, the Nebraska Department of Labor's job site, NEworks, provides you with the opportunity to register for employment services, post your resume, search job listings and apply for positions that match your qualifications. Individuals who remain actively engaged in a work search become reemployed more quickly. Please log on to: **NEworks.nebraska.gov**.

To receive your benefits while striving to find employment, we encourage you to use our simple online application to file for unemployment insurance benefits at **NEworks.nebraska.gov**. Online, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, you can file an initial unemployment insurance claim, certify your weekly eligibility or reopen a claim. If you need technical assistance in filing your claim online, or your claim involves federal, military or multiple state wages, call the Nebraska Claims Center at 402-458-2500.

The Nebraska Department of Labor is here to assist you and to support a successful transition to new employment.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John H. Albin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "John" being the most prominent.

John H. Albin
Commissioner of Labor

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When and How to File for Benefits

When

File an initial claim the same week you are unemployed or working reduced hours.

Your unemployment insurance claim DOES NOT begin on the date your job ended or your hours were reduced. **Your claim is effective the week you apply.**

How

File online at networks.nebraska.gov. (NEworks)

If you do not have access to the internet, you may use computers at any of the Nebraska Department of Labor locations listed in this Guide.

If you have never created a user ID and password, you will be prompted to do so. Otherwise, log in with your previous user ID and password. If you forgot your password, click the “Forgot Password” link on the NEworks home page and follow the instructions.

You will first create a personal profile and online resume for employers to view. These steps are mandatory for all claimants. See the [Registration in NEworks](#) section.

To apply for benefits, you will select File a New Unemployment Claim from the Unemployment Services Dashboard.

You will know the initial claim has been submitted upon receipt of a confirmation number.

If You Need Help

If you need assistance or your claim involves military, federal, or out-of-state wages, call the Nebraska Claims Center at 402-458-2500 between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., CST Monday-Friday.

TIP: To protect your privacy and ensure the accuracy of information provided to Nebraska Department of Labor, you should never have someone file a claim on your behalf.

Gather the Following Information Before Filing a Claim

- Social Security Number
- Complete home mailing address, including ZIP code
- Telephone number
- Email Address
- County you live in
- Driver's license number or State ID card number
- If you select direct deposit, your bank routing number and account number
- The company names for all your employers from the past 18 months as they appear on your paycheck stubs or W-2 forms
- Complete mailing addresses of employers, including ZIP code and the city in which the business is physically located
- Your start and end dates with each employer, including month, day, and year
- Your reason for leaving each employer (lack of work, voluntary quit, discharge, leave of absence, still employed)
- Employment authorization number and expiration date (if a non-citizen)
- If you worked in another state besides Nebraska in the last 18 months, you must call the Nebraska Claims Center at 402-458-2500 to file a combined wage claim.
- If you served in the military the past 18 months, DD 214 Member #4 Form. You must call the Nebraska Claims Center at 402-458-2500 to file a military claim.
- If you worked for the federal government as a civilian employee in the last 18 months, Standard Form 8 or Standard Form 50. Also, compile your total wages earned with the federal employer in the last 18 months and indicate how you were paid (hourly, weekly, monthly). You must call the Nebraska Claims Center at 402-458-2500 to file a federal claim.

Registering in NEworks and Filing an Initial Claim

You must register in NEworks - <https://neworks.nebraska.gov> - as part of the initial unemployment claim process. You will first complete a personal profile, an online resume, and finally, your initial claim for benefits. By law, registration is required in order to receive unemployment insurance benefits, even if you have a recall date with a particular employer or are a member of a union with a hiring hall. All claimants must register and complete an online resume.

Step 1: Go to the NEworks home page and click the “UNEMPLOYMENT” button.



Step 2: On the next screen, choose “File or Manage a Claim.”

[Get Information](#)

Unemployment benefits are paid from the Nebraska State Unemployment Insurance Fund. No deductions are taken from employees' paychecks. Eligibility requirements as defined in the Nebraska Employment Security Act. For more information on unemployment benefits, including how to apply, qualify and receive benefits, visit dol.nebraska.gov.



[File or Manage a Claim](#)

Prior to filing an unemployment insurance claim, you must register in NEworks. When filing, make sure to provide accurate employment information. For more information on filing a claim, visit dol.nebraska.gov.


[Report Unemployment Insurance Fraud](#)

Unemployment fraud is when anyone receives unemployment benefits while working full-time or part-time. Examples include returning to work full-time but continuing to receive unemployment benefits. For more information on reporting fraud, visit dol.nebraska.gov.

Step 3: You will then reach the sign-in page.

If this is the first time you are visiting NWorks or have not used the site for over one year, choose Option 2 – Create a User Account - Individual.

Option 2 - Create a User Account



To become a NWorks user with access to our online services, select one of the following account types. If you are not sure about registering, visit the [Why Register?](#) page.

[Individual](#) - Register as this account type if you are an individual and wish to search for the latest job openings, file or manage your unemployment claim, post a resumé online, find career guidance, search for training and education programs, find information on local employers, etc.


[Employer](#) - Register as this account type if you represent an employer and wish to post job openings online, search for candidates for your jobs, view local industry or labor market information, etc.

[Analyst](#) - Register as this account type if you are a labor market information or economic development professional looking to analyze area, occupation, and industry data over different geographical regions and time periods.

Return to previous page

If you are a recent, previous user of NWorks, go to Option 1 and login with your user name and password. If you forgot your user name or password, click the link below the password field – “Retrieve User Name or Password.” Take note of your User Name and Password for future use.

Option 1 - Already Registered



User Name:

Password:

Sign In

If you have forgotten your user name and/or password, please click [Retrieve User Name or Password](#).

Step 4: You will be presented with our Privacy agreement. Read and click “I Agree” to continue.

Step 5: Complete several screens regarding your profile. If you already have a profile, make sure it is up to date.

Step 6: After you have completed your registration, you will be directed to your dashboard.

Choose “Unemployment Services” from the left menu.

Welcome to My Individual Workspace
This page introduces you to system features and offers suggestions. Select from the items below to start customizing the content that interests you.

My Individual Workspace

- My Dashboard
- How We Can Help You
- Employment Strategy
- Directory of Services
- My Resources

Quick Menu

- Job Search
- Resumé Builder
- My Portfolio

Services for Individuals

- Career Services
- Job Seeker Services
- Education Services
- Labor Market Services
- Community Services and Benefits
- Financial Services
- Unemployment Services**
- Veteran Services
- Youth Services
- Senior Services
- Disability Services
- Staff Provided Services

Other Services

Services Preview

Explore a Career Change
We can show you occupations that are in demand that might be of interest to you based on your profile.

- Find in demand occupations
- New careers that match your job skills
- New careers that match your interests
- New careers that match what is important to you in a job
- New careers that match all your assessments
- Find occupations from our Career Ladder

Find a Job | Get Recruited & Be Proactive | Get Trained | Review the Job Market | Explore a New Career

Unemployment Assistance | Plan Your Finances | Review Benefits Available | Other Services

Job Seeker Services

- Job Search**
Find current job openings.
- Resumé Builder**
Create, store and update your resumé online.
- Virtual Recruiter**
Create a system job search alert.

[More Job Seeker Services](#)

My Personal Profile

- My Background**
 - Employment Histories
 - Education Histories
 - Certificates

[View Your Personal Profile](#)

Unemployment Services

- Unemployment Benefit Overview**
Information about the Unemployment Benefit program.
- File or Manage a Claim**
Access and view information regarding your claim.

Current Events

- WorkShop/Training: 2
- Job Fair: 0
- Meetings: 0
- Rapid Response: 0
- Orientation: 0
- Employer Recruitment Event: 0
- Other Events: 0

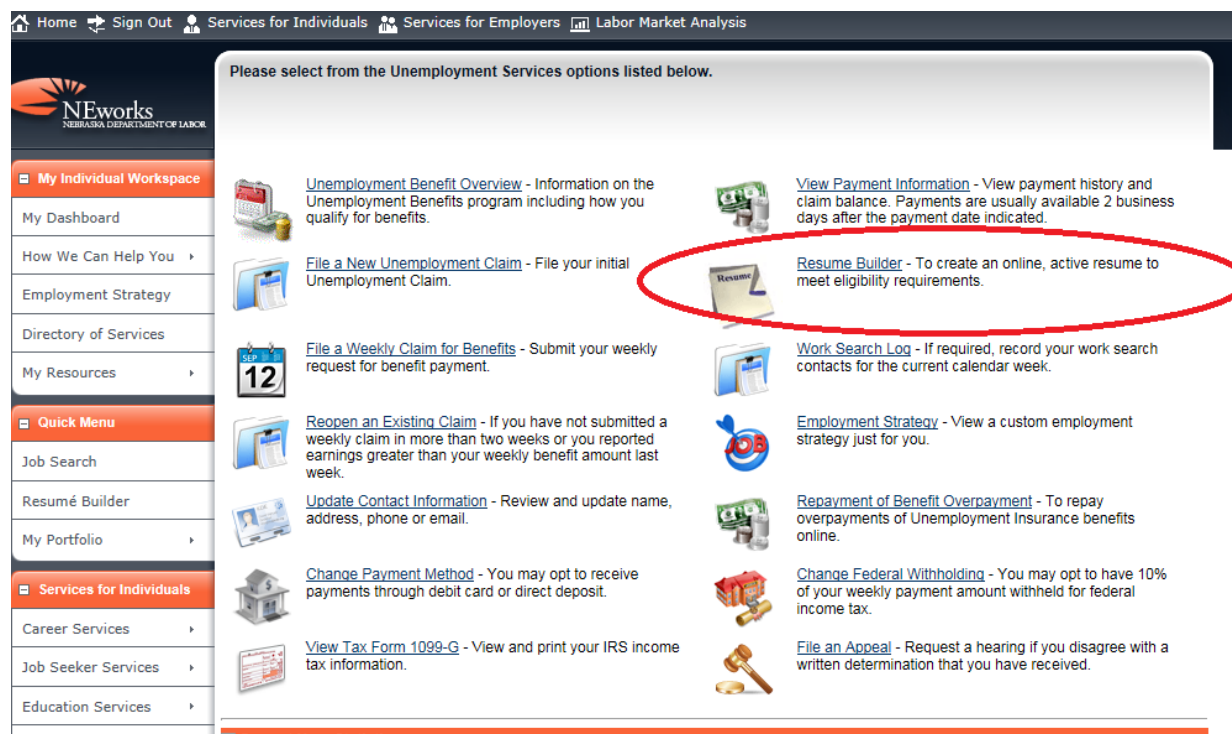
[More Events](#)

My Benefits Plan

WIA Applications

Step 7: Choose “**Resume Builder.**” If you choose “File an initial claim,” you will be redirected to create a resume.

Note: If you are reopening a claim, filing a weekly claim, or completing a work search log, choose the appropriate option. You are not required to complete a resume for reopened or weekly claims.




Step 8: Start building your resume by clicking the “Create new Resume” button. If you already have a resume, make sure it is up to date.

Create new Resumé

Step 9: Create a resumé.

NOTE: To be eligible for unemployment benefits, your resumé must be available to employers online in the “Resumé Accessibility” section. Even if you are going back to work for your employer or are a member of a union with a hiring hall, you must complete an online resume.

* indicates required fields.

 For help click t

Resumé Type

Resumé Creation Method:

- ☒ Internal Resumé - Build your resumé using a step-by-step process (create your resumé from scratch).
- ☐ External Resumé – Attach an existing Word or .PDF resumé (save time by using your existing resumé).
- ☐ Copy-and-Paste Format - transfer resumé's text from an existing copy (quick - but not as useful to potential employers).

Resumé Name

* Resumé Title:

Resumé Accessibility

Accessibility:

- ☐ Select if you **do not want** your resumé available to employers online
- ☒ Select if you **want** your resumé available to employers online



Step 10: After you complete your resumé (this will be several screens), click the “Save Resume’ and Return” button.

Step 11: Choose “**Unemployment Services**” from the following options:

What would you like to do next?



[Search for Jobs](#)

This option will let you search for jobs using the criteria you just entered into your online resume.



[Edit this Résumé](#)

This option will enable you to edit your newly created resumé.



[View all your Resumés](#)

By using this option, you can view your current resumés, update any existing resumés or create a new resumé.



[Add another Résumé](#)

This option will take you to the Résumé Wizard to create a new resumé.



[WIA Pre-Application](#)

Fill out an application to determine if you may be eligible for WIA program benefits.



[Return to My Dashboard](#)

This option will take you back to your personal dashboard page where you can access additional services.



[Unemployment Services](#)

This option will take you through the unemployment insurance claim process, including filing a claim, completing your weekly certification, and modifying your contact and payment information

Step 12: You will be presented with this menu. Choose File a New Unemployment Claim.

Or, if you are reopening a claim, filing a weekly claim, or completing a work search log, choose the appropriate option.

Please select from the Unemployment Services options listed below.



[Unemployment Benefit Overview](#) - Information on the Unemployment Benefits program including how you qualify for benefits.



[File a New Unemployment Claim](#) - File your initial Unemployment Claim.



[File a Weekly Claim for Benefits](#) - Submit your weekly request for benefit payment.



[Reopen an Existing Claim](#) - If you have not submitted a weekly claim in more than two weeks or you reported earnings greater than your weekly benefit amount last week.



[Update Contact Information](#) - Review and update name, address, phone or email.



[Change Payment Method](#) - You may opt to receive payments through debit card or direct deposit.



[View Tax Form 1099-G](#) - View and print your IRS income tax information.



[View Payment Information](#) - View payment history and claim balance. Payments are usually available 2 business days after the payment date indicated.



[Resume Builder](#) - To create an online, active resume to meet eligibility requirements.



[Work Search Log](#) - If required, record your work search contacts for the current calendar week.



[Employment Strategy](#) - View a custom employment strategy just for you.



[Repayment of Benefit Overpayment](#) - To repay overpayments of Unemployment Insurance benefits online.



[Change Federal Withholding](#) - You may opt to have 10% of your weekly payment amount withheld for federal income tax.



[File an Appeal](#) - Request a hearing if you disagree with a written determination that you have received.

Current Hour Statistics

Step 13: From this menu, choose “FILE A NEW UNEMPLOYMENT CLAIM.”

Or, if you are reopening a claim, filing a weekly claim, or completing a work search log, choose the appropriate option.

Unemployment Benefits

Choose an option below:

[UNEMPLOYMENT SERVICES MENU](#)

- **Change Your Contact Information**
- **Create Your Resume**
- **Search for Jobs**

WEEKLY ACTIVITIES:

[WORK SEARCH LOG](#) If required, record your work search contacts for the current calendar week.

[FILE WEEKLY CLAIM FOR BENEFITS](#) Submit your weekly request for benefit payment.

FILE A CLAIM:

[FILE A NEW UNEMPLOYMENT CLAIM](#) File your initial Unemployment Claim.

[REOPEN AN EXISTING CLAIM](#) If you have not submitted a weekly claim in more than two weeks or you reported earnings greater than your weekly benefit amount last week.

CLAIM INFORMATION:

[VIEW PAYMENT INFORMATION](#) View payment history and claim balance. Payments are usually available 2 business days after the payment date indicated.

[REPAYMENT OF BENEFIT OVERPAYMENT](#) **Coming Soon:** To repay overpayments of Unemployment Insurance benefits online.

[CHANGE PAYMENT METHOD](#) You may opt to receive payments through debit card or direct deposit.

[CHANGE FEDERAL WITHHOLDING](#) You can opt to have 10% of your weekly payment amount withheld for federal income tax.

[VIEW TAX FORM 1099-G](#) View and print your IRS income tax information.

APPEAL A DETERMINATION:

[FILE AN APPEAL](#) Request a hearing if you disagree with a written determination that you have received.

Step 14: Continue through several more screens to complete the filing of your initial claim. You will know that your claim has been submitted when you receive a confirmation number.

Example below:

- Confirmation Number: **R2015060216061473532**

While Your Claim is Pending

It takes several weeks to process a claim. If necessary, we'll call you just as soon as your claim is ready to be completed. Calling before then will not speed up the processing of your claim.

File a weekly claim every week online at neworks.nebraska.gov, even while you are waiting for your claim to be processed or while you have an appeal pending. Be sure to file your weekly claims on time. You have from 12:01 a.m. Sunday to midnight Friday to request benefits for the previous week. Failure to file your weekly claim on time could result in denial of benefits.

If instructed, make the required number of work search contacts, as outlined in the Work Search Requirements section of this Guide. Log your contacts online at neworks.nebraska.gov. Complete as much information as possible because your work search contacts may be audited. Your benefits may be denied for any week in which information you provide on work searches is not verifiable or you fail to report your work search contacts in your online work search log.

Report all work and earnings when submitting your weekly claim. Report your gross earnings before any deductions and taxes for the week you perform the work. Do not wait until you are paid to report your earnings. If you are earning more than the amount of your weekly benefits, you are no longer considered unemployed and eligible for benefits. If you become unemployed again, you can reopen your claim.

Read all communication you receive electronically and through the mail from the Nebraska Department of Labor. Keep your address current because you'll receive letters outlining what you need to do to maintain benefit eligibility.

When you return to full-time work, stop claiming benefits. Do not wait until you are paid. Intentionally misreporting your wages may be considered fraud, which is subject to severe penalties.

Work Search Requirements

You must make an active search for work each week you claim benefits. It is required that you make a minimum of two new contacts with prospective employers in person or via mail, telephone or internet. If your claim is based on full-time earnings in the base period, your work search must be for prospective full-time employment opportunities. If your unemployment claim is based on primarily part-time employment, you are permitted to make job contacts for part-time or full-time work. NESL: 48-627(3)(e)

The active work search requirement for each week benefits are claimed may be waived if you are on a temporary layoff with a definite return to work date, attached to certain industries or are a member in good standing with a union hiring hall. NAC 219, Chap 4, NAC 219, Chap 2, 003 B

Coming Soon

For new claims filed, you must contact a minimum of five different employers and submit the required number of applications as shown below. As you claim more weeks of unemployment benefits, you are required to look for work on more days per week, as outlined in this chart:

Weeks Claimed	Required Work Search Contacts	Required Applications	Minimum Number of Days to Seek Work
1-5	5	1	1
6-13	5	2	3
14-26	5	2	4

Work Search Log Requirements

Every week, you must complete an online work search log, in order to remain eligible for benefits. If you are a member of a union with a hiring hall, have a return-to-work date, or are in a TRADE or Approved Training program, you do not need to complete weekly work search logs. If you are required to complete a weekly work search log and fail to do so you will not be eligible for benefits. NAC Title 219, Chap 4

You have two options for logging your work search:

1. You may log your work search contacts online in NEworks as soon as you make them, before you submit your weekly claim for benefits. Log into your account and select Work Search Log from the Unemployment Services dashboard. To get to the work search log from the dol.nebraska.gov home page, choose the “NEworks” icon.
2. You may also log your work search contacts for the previous week at the same time you claim your weekly benefits. To log work search contacts during your weekly claim, login to NEworks and complete the weekly claim process. An option will be presented to you to log your weekly work searches.

Please note: You will not be able to log your work search contacts for the previous week after you submit your weekly claim for benefits.

TIP: If you need additional help with your work search log or weekly claim, please download step by step screenshot instructions from dol.nebraska.gov. Or you may pick up a copy of the instructions from your local American Job Center or NDOL office.

Your work search log is subject to ongoing audit review and a disqualification from benefits may be assessed if you fail to make and report the required weekly contacts. Each work search contact entered into the log has required information but should include additional information such as date of contact, name of the person contacted, name of the employer contacted, employer’s address and phone number, the position applied for and the method of contact (in person, online application or email, telephone or regular mail contact).















Filing Weekly Claims

How to File

After you file your initial claim, you must file weekly claims online at networks.nebraska.gov for every week you are unemployed or your hours are reduced. You must file a weekly claim for any week that you want payment or waiting week credit, **even if your eligibility is being decided or you have an appeal pending.**

To file a weekly claim, login to your NEworks account and choose “File A Weekly Claim” from the Unemployment Services Dashboard.

Please select from the Unemployment Services options listed below.

 Unemployment Benefit Overview - Information on the Unemployment Benefits program including how you qualify for benefits.	 View Payment Information - View payment history and claim balance. Payments are usually available 2 business days after the payment date indicated.
 File a New Unemployment Claim - File your initial Unemployment Claim.	 Resume Builder - To create an online, active resume to meet eligibility requirements.
 File a Weekly Claim for Benefits - Submit your weekly request for benefit payment.	 Work Search Log - If required, record your work search contacts for the current calendar week.
 Reopen an Existing Claim - If you have not submitted a weekly claim in more than two weeks or you reported earnings greater than your weekly benefit amount last week.	 Employment Strategy - View a custom employment strategy just for you.
 Update Contact Information - Review and update name, address, phone or email.	 Repayment of Benefit Overpayment - To repay overpayments of Unemployment Insurance benefits online.
 Change Payment Method - You may opt to receive payments through debit card or direct deposit.	 Change Federal Withholding - You may opt to have 10% of your weekly payment amount withheld for federal income tax.
 View Tax Form 1099-G - View and print your IRS income tax information.	 File an Appeal - Request a hearing if you disagree with a written determination that you have received.

When to File

You have from 12:01 a.m. Sunday to midnight Friday to request benefits for the previous week. Failure to file your weekly claim on time could result in denial of benefits. NAC Title 219, Chap 2, 003, C, D

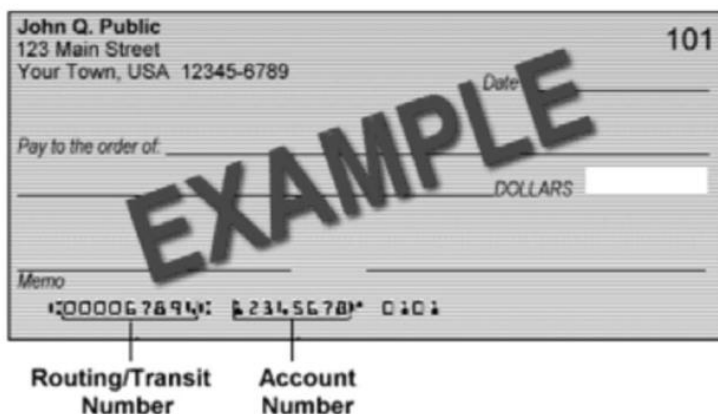
Methods of Payment

You are required to select a payment method of direct deposit or debit card when filing your initial claim. We do not issue paper checks. You can select or change your payment method by logging into your unemployment claim online 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, at networks.nebraska.gov.

Direct Deposit

Direct deposit is an electronic payment transfer to an individual's checking or savings account. When you file your initial claim and select direct deposit as your preferred method of payment, or when you modify your bank account information, you must enter the bank routing and account numbers. You are solely responsible for the accuracy of the account information. Incorrect information may result in a delay of benefit payments, and possible fees. You are also solely responsible for updating your banking information should changes occur. Failure to do so could affect timely receipt of your unemployment insurance benefits.

A.B.A Routing Numbers Example



For direct deposit, your routing and account numbers can be found at the bottom of your paper checks. If you do not know the appropriate routing number or your checking or savings account number, please contact your bank.

DO NOT enter an account number from a personal debit card.

Do not enter PREPAID CARD numbers into the direct deposit account information. Payments will not be issued to any prepaid cards under the direct deposit payment method.

Debit Card

The ReliaCard debit card is a VISA prepaid card issued by US Bank. The ReliaCard debit card is mailed in a plain white envelope from Indianapolis, Indiana at the time a claim becomes payable. There is no information on the envelope indicating that a ReliaCard debit card is enclosed. Keep all information that is provided with the card. You can expect to receive the card approximately 7-10 days after you receive waiting week credit.

Keep your ReliaCard debit card until the expiration date printed on the card.

If you have a change of address, you must report your new address to ReliaCard by calling US Bank/Reliacard Customer Service at 855-233-8429. It is also necessary that you update your address with the Nebraska Department of Labor by visiting networks.nebraska.gov.

For more information visit: www.usbankreliacard.com

Waiting Week

The first eligible week is called your “waiting week.” To get credit for the waiting week, you must request a payment and meet all eligibility requirements for that week. The waiting week is never paid. However, you must serve a waiting week to be eligible for payments for later weeks. There is one waiting week per benefit year. *If for any reason your benefits are denied for the beginning weeks of your request, your waiting week will be your first eligible week after the denial period.* A week that is prior to the effective date of the claim or a week that is under disqualification for any reason cannot be used as the waiting week. NESL: 48-627 (4)

Base Period

The base period is the time period of employment used to evaluate your claim. A quarter consists of three consecutive months. Each calendar year consists of four quarters. The regular base period is the first four of the last five completed quarters at the time of your claim (see orange shaded area in graphic below).

If eligibility cannot be established for a regular base period claim, the Department of Labor will explore alternate base period eligibility. The alternate base period consists of the last four completed quarters. (See asterisks in graphic below.) NESL: 48-602 (1)

Left End Box in Each Row Represents Quarter Claim Filed

Shaded Area Represents Regular Base Period Quarters Used to Determine Eligibility

**** Represents Alternate Base Period Quarters used to Determine Eligibility**

Oct Nov Dec	Jan Feb Mar **	Apr May Jun **	Jul Aug Sept **	Oct Nov Dec **	Jan Feb Mar Claim Filed			
	Jan Feb Mar **	Apr May Jun **	Jul Aug Sept **	Oct Nov Dec **	Jan Feb Mar **	Apr May Jun Claim Filed		
		Apr May Jun **	Jul Aug Sept **	Oct Nov Dec **	Jan Feb Mar **	Apr May Jun **	Jul Aug Sept Claim Filed	
			Jul Aug Sept **	Oct Nov Dec **	Jan Feb Mar **	Apr May Jun **	Jul Aug Sept **	Oct Nov Dec Claim Filed

Qualifying Wages for Eligibility

In order to meet eligibility for unemployment insurance benefits, you must meet the minimum earnings requirements from insured work during the [base period](#). The minimum earnings requirements are adjusted annually.

For 2015, the minimum base period earnings requirement is \$4,094.89.

In addition to meeting the minimum earnings requirements, you must also have been paid at least \$1,850 in one quarter and \$800 in another quarter.

Note: Wages must be earned from employers required to pay unemployment insurance taxes (insured employers). NESL: 48-602(1)

If you are not sure whether your work is insured employment, you should file a claim and request weekly benefits. A wage investigation will be conducted to determine if you are eligible to receive benefits.

When you return to full-time work, stop claiming benefits. Do not wait until you are paid. Intentionally misreporting your wages may be considered fraud, which is subject to severe penalties.

Requalification Between Two Claim Years

Under Nebraska law, you cannot receive benefits on ‘back-to-back’ unemployment claims unless you have worked in insured employment since the effective date of your prior claim and earned at least six times the previous weekly benefit amount. Your new claim must meet both the minimum monetary requirements and the requalification requirement. NESL: 48-627(5)

Benefit Amounts

For 2015, the maximum weekly benefit amount is \$380.

Your individual benefits are calculated by identifying the highest quarter earnings in your base period. That amount is then divided by 13 to arrive at the *average weekly wage*, then divided again by two and rounded down to the next even dollar amount to arrive at your weekly benefit amount. You will be advised of this amount when you receive your monetary determination in the mail. NESL 48-624

You may be eligible for up to 26 weeks of benefits during a 12-month period. The maximum amount of unemployment benefits you may receive during your benefit year is 26 times your weekly benefit amount, or 1/3 of your total base period wages, whichever is less. Your maximum amount is calculated after any separation issues are adjudicated and may be reduced when there are separation disqualifications, such as a discharge or quit.

If You Are Working While Claiming

Report Earnings If You Are Working

Each time you request a benefit payment, you are asked if you worked. Answer “yes” if you performed any work, even if it was temporary, part-time, or self-employment. **You must report your gross earnings** (before deductions and taxes). Earnings include wages, tips, salary, commission, cash, self-employment income, allowances for meals or lodging, vacation pay and bonuses.

You must report your earnings in the week you perform the work, not when you are paid for it. If you worked for more than one employer in a week, add your earnings from all employers. For self-employment, report your weekly earnings after you deduct your direct business expenses for that week.

If you earned less than your weekly benefit amount for any claimed week, you may be eligible for partial benefits. NESL:48-625

Failure to report all work and income for weeks that benefits are claimed will result in having to repay the benefits improperly received and may result in loss of rights to future benefits, penalty and/or criminal prosecution.

Stopping & Re-starting Benefits

Returning to Full-Time Work

When you return to work full time or want to stop requesting benefit payments for any reason, no notification to the Department of Labor is needed. Just stop requesting weekly benefits. If you are earning more than the amount of your weekly benefits, you are no longer considered unemployed and eligible for benefits. Keep your NEworks login information and unemployment debit card (if applicable) in a safe place in case you need to start requesting benefits again or need to review your benefit history.

To Reopen Your Claim

If you become unemployed again and wish to file for benefits, **go online to** neworks.nebraska.gov and reopen your claim during the first week your job has ended or your employer has reduced your work hours. If you need assistance, call the Claims Center at 402-458-2500. **You will not be able to file a weekly claim for benefits until you reopen your claim.**

The Adjudication Process

Adjudication is the process used to resolve legal questions regarding whether you should be paid unemployment insurance benefits.

Your claim may be referred to an adjudicator if there are questions about why you left your job or whether you are able and available for work. Other issues may also prompt a claim to be referred to an adjudicator. Please see the [Eligibility Issues](#) and [Separation Issues](#) sections.

If you receive a phone call or letter from an adjudicator, respond immediately. If you do not respond when required, a decision will be based on the available information, which could result in a denial of benefits.

To prepare for an adjudicator's call, have the following information ready:

- Reason for separation from you employer
- Dates when events happened causing the separation
- Names of witnesses or supervisors involved with the separation
- Written documentation, such as warnings, medical notes, if applicable
- Check stubs verifying vacation, severance, holiday or bonus pay, if applicable
- Any questions you may have

During adjudication, we will make a determination about your claim based on all available information, including information from you, your employers, and sometimes other sources.

While your claim is pending adjudication, continue to file timely weekly claims and complete your weekly online work search logs. If your claim is determined payable and you have met all other eligibility requirements, you will receive back payments for prior weeks claimed in a lump sum.

If you disagree with a determination issued, you have the right to appeal within 20 days. Please see the Appeals section of this guide for further instructions.

Eligibility Issues

Able and Available to Work

You must be able to work and available for work four or more days of the week in order to be eligible for unemployment insurance benefits. You are not considered able and available if circumstances such as lack of transportation, childcare problems, family care issues, sickness or injury would prevent you from working. You are not considered available for work if you are in jail four or more days during the week. Claiming benefits while incarcerated is fraud and may result in criminal prosecution. NAC Title 219, Chap 4

Active Registration

You are required to maintain an active NEworks registration and on-line resume while you are receiving unemployment benefits. If no activity is recorded for 90 days, your registration will be inactivated.

To reactivate your registration, you must open and save your personal profile. While in your personal profile, verify your address is current. In addition to verifying your personal profile, you must also reactivate your resume. Click the on the title of your resume then click the Save and Return button at the bottom of the page. Please do both these things, even if you have no changes.

NESL:48-627(1); NAC 219 Ch. 2.

Education Employees

If you are employed for or on behalf of an educational institution, benefits (based on wages earned from educational institutions) may be denied between terms and/or during regularly scheduled breaks.

NESL:48-628(8)

Reemployment Services

The Nebraska Department of Labor participates in a special program designed to help you find work. The program selects individuals early in their unemployment and offers job-seeker services that may quicken reemployment. If you receive a notice that you have been selected, you are required to take part in this program. If you do not, you may be disqualified from benefits. NESL: 48-627(6)

Reporting

The Nebraska Department of Labor may contact you and require that you provide additional information regarding your claim. If you fail to report and provide the information requested, you may be disqualified for benefits. NAC Title 219 Chap 2, 004

While claiming unemployment benefits, it is critical that you watch your mail and telephone messages for any communications from Nebraska Department of Labor.

School Attendance and Approved Training

Attending School

If you are regularly attending school as a full-time student, you may be disqualified from benefits unless you were a student at the time you earned the majority of the wages in your base period. An exception may apply if you are enrolled in a training program which has been approved by the Commissioner of Labor. NESL:48-628(7)

Approved Training Program

If you applied for unemployment insurance benefits and are planning to attend vocational training, you may apply for the Approved Training program. If your application is approved by the Commissioner of Labor, the work search requirements will be waived while you are in training until you exhaust your regular Unemployment Insurance claim. After your regular unemployment benefits are exhausted, you may be eligible for up to an additional 26 weeks of benefits if you continue your training. Tuition and school expenses are not paid under this program. Work search requirements are waived while you are receiving additional benefits under the Approved Training Program. NAC Title 225, Chap 1

For more information regarding this program, you may obtain the program brochure and application [here](#) or contact the Approved Training Unit at (402) 471-9000.

Strike / Labor Dispute

In general, individuals are disqualified for the week(s) they are unemployed due to a work stoppage resulting from a strike or lockout. NESL:48-628(4)

Vacation, Severance, or Receipt of Other Payments

Benefits may be denied or reduced for any week in which you receive additional payments from your employer. Examples include vacation, severance, holiday, bonus, sick, workers' compensation or pension payments. NESL:48- 628(5)

Work Refusal

You may be disqualified for 12 weeks for failing to accept an offer of suitable employment or failure to accept a Nebraska Department of Labor Employment Service referral. Suitability is determined by considering a person's training and experience and the conditions in the labor market. Maximum benefits payable may also be reduced when a disqualification is assessed. NESL:48-628(3)

Work Search

If you do not meet the minimum requirements for your weekly work search contacts during the benefit week, you will be disqualified for the period in which your work search was inadequate. See the Work Search Requirements section of this Guide for more information. NAC Title 219; Chap 4

Separation Issues

Voluntary Quit

If a person has quit a job without good cause, a disqualification is assessed for the week of the quit plus 13 weeks, as determined by the Nebraska Department of Labor. In Nebraska, good cause for quitting is limited to the conditions of work, compelling health reasons, or quitting to escape spousal abuse. Maximum benefits payable may also be reduced when a disqualified is assessed. NESL:48-628(1)

Discharge

Discharge for Ordinary Misconduct

If a person is discharged from a job for misconduct, a disqualification is assessed for the week of the discharge plus 14 weeks, as determined by the Nebraska Department of Labor. In cases of misconduct, the burden of proof is on the employer. The employer must prove that an employee was discharged for acts or omissions that 1) damaged the employer's interest in relation to the employment; 2) the employee knew or reasonably should have known were contrary to the employer's interests; and 3) were willful or within the employee's control. Maximum benefits payable may also be reduced when a disqualification is assessed. NESL: 48-628(2)

Discharge for Aggravated Misconduct

If a person is discharged for misconduct not considered to be willful and flagrant or unlawful, but which included being under the influence of any intoxicating beverage or being under the influence of any controlled substance not prescribed by a physician licensed to practice medicine or surgery, and when the person is under the influence on the work site or while engaged in work for the employer, then the disqualification includes a cancellation of wages from the employer. NESL: 48-628(2)

Discharge for Gross Misconduct

If a person is discharged due to an act or omission that is willful and flagrant or unlawful, that individual does not qualify for benefits on wages earned prior to the date of the act. NESL:48-628(2)

Leave of Absence

To receive unemployment benefits, you must be completely separated from your employer or working reduced hours.

A leave of absence is not a complete separation from employment. As generally defined, a leave of absence is a mutual agreement between the employee and employer. The employee is not separated and does not report for work for a mutually agreed upon time period.

The Nebraska Employment Security Law requires a disqualification from benefits for any week in which the individual is on a leave of absence. NESL 48-602, 48-628. 219 NAC 8

To File an Appeal

You have the right to appeal if you disagree with a determination regarding your claim. Your appeal must be received at the Nebraska Claims Center or filed online within 20 calendar days from the date the determination was mailed.

You can file your appeal online at networks.nebraska.gov, in writing by mail, or by fax (402-471-1734). If filing an appeal by mail, send to: Nebraska Appeal Tribunal, Nebraska Department of Labor, PO Box 98941. If your appeal is in writing, you must state the reason you wish to appeal, and include your signature, Social Security Number and employer's name. There are two parties that may file an appeal regarding your unemployment benefits - you, the claimant, and your former employer. NESL: 48-634

After the Appeal is Filed

You will be notified by the Nebraska Appeal Tribunal that an appeal has been received. In a separate notice, you will be informed of the time and date of the hearing. Follow all instructions from the Appeal Tribunal to protect your own interests.

It is important that you participate in the hearing. Appeal hearings are free and a lawyer is not required, although you may be represented at your own expense. Appeal hearings are conducted by telephone conference call.

While your appeal is pending, continue to file for weekly benefits, complete any required work search contacts, and log these contacts at networks.nebraska.gov.

If You Disagree With the Appeal Decision

You may request by mail that the decision be reconsidered or you may appeal to the District Court.
NESL:48-638

Overpayments and Fraud

Overpayment of Unemployment Benefits

If you are paid more than you are eligible to receive, you will be notified in writing that you have been overpaid. All overpayments must be repaid. You may contact the Benefit Payment Control Unit at 402-471-2865 or NDOL.BenefitOverpayment@nebraska.gov to set up a repayment schedule if you are unable to repay the entire amount at one time. Otherwise, weekly benefit payments may be intercepted and applied towards your overpayment. The Nebraska Department of Labor can recover overpayments by intercepting your state and/or federal income tax refund and/or through civil action. NESL: 48-665

Unemployment Insurance Fraud

Failure to report information that affects your eligibility for unemployment benefits may be an act of fraud. Falsely reporting information on your claim application or weekly claim certifications may also be an act of fraud. NESL: 48-663, 663.01

Consequences of claimant unemployment insurance fraud may include: repaying benefits received, a 15 % penalty based on the amount of the overpayment, losing eligibility to receive benefits now and in the future, forfeiting state and federal income tax refunds, criminal charges, jail time, and felony or misdemeanor conviction. If you have a balance due on two or more fraudulent overpayments determined within 5 years prior to the effective date of a claim, you are disqualified until the overpaid benefits are repaid in full. NESL 48-628(13)

Benefit Accuracy Reviews

Nebraska participates in a statistical survey of the Unemployment Insurance system benefit payments and denials. The Benefit Accuracy Measurement Unit (BAM) randomly selects for audit a specific number of claims each week. BAM investigators review and verify all data related to the case file and conduct an investigation gathering new information from claimants, employers and other sources when necessary to determine if payments or denials are proper or improper. Areas investigated include, but are not limited to, base period wages reported by employers, the reasons for separation or reduction in working hours, claimant ability and availability for work, claimant work search activity, and earnings reported during the benefit year.

Most benefit payments and denials are determined to be proper. When improper payments or denials are discovered, the BAM investigator may make corrections on the claim or forward it to the appropriate unit for corrections. BAM records the number, cause, and responsibility for the errors. As a statistical survey based on a random sample, the results are projected to determine improper payment or denial rates.

The data accumulated by the BAM Unit is beneficial to the Department of Labor in determining if corrective action or program enhancements can increase the effective and efficient administration of the Unemployment Insurance system, and for maintaining the integrity of the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund. Selected claimants are required to participate in the investigation. Failure to report may result in a denial of benefits. NAC Title 219 Chap 2, 004

Income Tax Withholding

Unemployment benefits are taxable income under federal and state law. The benefits paid to you are reported to the Internal Revenue Service and to the Nebraska Department of Revenue. No income tax is withheld from your benefit payments unless you request it. If you decide to have taxes withheld, 10 percent will be deducted from your weekly benefit payment for federal taxes.

You can request, stop, or change your income tax withholding by logging into your account at networks.nebraska.gov or by calling the Claims Center at 402-458-2500.

No later than January 31, you will be mailed an IRS Form 1099-G showing the total benefits paid to you for the prior year and the federal income taxes withheld. It will be sent to your last known address, so keep your address current at networks.nebraska.gov. You can view and print your 1099-G form online by logging into your account at networks.nebraska.gov.

Office Locations

American Job Centers

Lincoln

SCC Education Square Campus
1111 "O" St. Ste. 205
402-441-1660

Grand Island

203 E. Stolley Park Rd, Ste. A
308-385-6312

Omaha

Heartland Workforce Solutions
5752 Ames Ave.
402-444-4700

NDOL Locations

Alliance

302 Box Butte Ave.
308-763-2935

Nebraska City

917 Wildwood Ln. Room 104
402-873-3384

Beatrice

5109 W. Scott Rd. Ste. 413
402-223-6060

Norfolk

105 E. Norfolk Ave. Ste. 100
402-370-3430

Columbus

3100 23rd St. Ste. 22
402-564-7160

North Platte

306 East 6th, Ste 140
308-535-8320

Hastings

2727 W. 2nd St. Ste. 338
402-462-1867

Omaha

5717 F St.
402-595-3000

Lexington

1501 Plum Creek Pkwy. Ste. 3
308-324-2064

Scottsbluff

505A Broadway, Ste. 300
308-632-1420

Lincoln

1111 "O" Street, Ste. 222
402-471-2275

York

510 Lincoln Ave.
402-362-5891

Claims Services and Hours of Operations

Online Services

neworks.nebraska.gov

- File a New Claim
- File Weekly Claims
- Reopen a Claim
- Check Payment Status
- Change Method of Payment
- Retrieve Tax Statements
- View Payment History
- Update Contact Information

All claims, except claims involving wages paid by the military or the federal government or wages earned in other states, should be filed online unless you need technical assistance.

You have from Sunday 12:01 am to Midnight Central Time Friday to file a weekly claim for benefits for the previous week. You can file your claim anywhere that you can access the internet, including the office locations listed in this Guide.

ReliaCard (Debit card inquiries)

(855) 233-8429

Deaf and Impaired Hearing

TTY Lincoln: 402-471-0016

All other Inquiries and Assistance

Nebraska Claims Center: 402-458-2500

Claims Specialists are available Monday – Friday 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Unemployment Record and Your Privacy

Your Privacy Rights

To protect your privacy, the NDOL does not provide information about your claim to anyone other than you, whether the information is requested in person, in writing, by email or over the phone. We cannot give information to a family member.

Verifying Employment Eligibility

The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (P.L-99-803) requires all employers to verify employment eligibility of new employees. When an employer hires you, the employer will require that you show certain documents to prove your identity and employment eligibility. Failure to present the documents to your employer or the Nebraska Department of Labor may affect your eligibility for unemployment benefits.

Your Privacy and Your Password

When filing for unemployment benefits, you will choose a secure password to protect your privacy and ensure the utmost security. You will need your secure password to file your weekly claim each week, so be sure to keep it in a safe place. The secure password should not be obvious to others. Do not use your address, phone number, date of birth or anything else that someone would be able to guess. Do not use numbers in sequence or repeat numbers.

Equal Opportunity Statement

Equal Opportunity Is the Law

It is against the law for this recipient of Federal financial assistance to discriminate on the following bases: against any individual in the United States, on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation or belief; and against any beneficiary of programs financially assisted under Title I of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA), on the basis of the beneficiary's citizenship/status as a lawfully admitted immigrant authorized to work in the United States, or his or her participation in any WIA Title I financially-assisted program or activity. The recipient must not discriminate in any of the following areas: deciding who will be admitted, or have access, to any WIA Title I financially-assisted program or activity; providing opportunities in, or treating any person with regard to, such a program or activity; or making employment decisions in the administration of, or in connection with, such a program or activity.

What to Do If You Believe You Have Experienced Discrimination

If you think you have been subjected to discrimination by your past employer, please contact the Nebraska Equal Opportunity Commission at (402) 471-2024 or 1 (800) 642-6112. If you think that you have been subjected to discrimination under a WIA Title I financially-assisted program or activity, you may file a complaint within 180 days from the date of the alleged violation with:

Terri Slone
EO Officer of Nebraska Department of Labor
S. 16th Street P.O. Box 94600
Lincoln, NE 68509-4600
402-471-8358 TDD 800-833-7352

or

Director, Civil Rights Center (CRC)
U.S. Department of Labor
200 Constitution Avenue NW, Room N-4123
Washington, DC 20210

If you file your complaint with the EO Officer, you must wait either until a written Notice of Final Action is issued, or until 90 days have passed (whichever is sooner), before filing with the Civil Rights Center. If you do not receive a written Notice of Final Action within 90 days of the day on which you filed your complaint, you do not have to wait before filing a complaint with CRC. However, you must file your CRC complaint within 30 days of the 90-day deadline (in other words, within 120 days after the day on which you filed your complaint with the EO Officer).

If you receive a written Notice of Final Action on your complaint, but you are dissatisfied with the decision or resolution, you may file a complaint with CRC. You must file your CRC complaint within 30 days of the date on which you received the Notice of Final Action.



Equal Opportunity Program/Employer
TDD: 800.833.7352

Auxiliary aids and services are available upon
request to individuals with disabilities.